

THE CHLORINE FREE PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION (CFPA)

Introduction

During the early 1990s, environmental campaigns against the use of chlorine bleaching in paper manufacturing prompted some manufacturers to seek alternative methods of paper processing. Wishing to publicize the use of such alternative methods, paper and pulp manufacturers interested in chlorine-free bleaching established the Chlorine Free Products Association (CFPA) in March of 1994 as a non-profit trade association dedicated to the elimination of chlorine-based chemistry in manufacturing processes. Supported primarily by pulp and paper manufacturers and associated businesses, CFPA's activities are focused on advocating totally chlorine-free (TCF) processing, educating consumers on chlorine processing alternatives, and developing markets for TCF manufacturers. On June 9, 1997, CFPA announced the development of a certification program for the pulp and paper industry. It is also in the process of developing a certification program for recreational and drinking water purification.

Program Summary

The CFPA pulp and paper certification program is completely voluntary and examines the bleaching chemistry used in paper mills, bleach plants, and/or de-inking facilities. Facilities whose bleaching processes are free of chlorine and chlorine compounds may be certified. While hired technicians perform the actual site visit, CFPA staff set the criteria for chlorine-free processing based on standard TAPPI (Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry) processes used in the pulp and paper industry. The manufacturing plant is visited biannually to ensure compliance with TCF standards. Though CFPA itself is funded by member dues, there are unpublished evaluation fees associated with the certification, which must be renewed annually.

For the pulp and paper industry, CFPA has developed two logos for use on paper products. "Totally Chlorine Free" logos are reserved for virgin fiber papers that have been produced without the use of pulp bleached with chlorine or chlorine compounds. "Processed Chlorine Free" logos are for recycled content papers and indicate that any virgin fiber is totally chlorine-free and that the recycled content, though it may have originally undergone chlorine bleaching, was not re-bleached with chlorine-containing compounds when recycled. The logo also ensures that a minimum of 20 percent post-consumer waste was used. Once certified, companies may use the proper CFPA logo in ads and on retail products. Certified pulp manufacturers may provide their logos to distributors who market or process their chlorine-free goods, but they are responsible for the correct use of the logo. Any use of the logos must be registered with CFPA. CFPA also asks certified facilities for annual sales reports so that they can track the market success of CFPA's certified products. Two facilities are currently certified. The pulp and paper industry is the first to use the logo, but others will use it soon, except water purification.

Program Methodology

CFPA's selection of product categories is done through environmental impact evaluation, political processes, and manufacturer initiative. Product criteria are developed through a published peer-review process. Product criteria address manufacturing processes, product uses, reuse, recycling, ingredient or materials restrictions, and the environmental performance of production processes. Both manufacturers' input and impending studies serve to inform the selection of product categories and the setting of product criteria.

Other Information

As part of its efforts to promote chlorine-free processing, CFPA has been involved in efforts to obtain federal procurement preference for chlorine-free papers under President Clinton's 1993 executive order 12873. This executive order directs federal agencies to purchase "environmentally preferable" products, a designation whose current definition does not include chlorine-free papers. The development since 1993 of several chlorine-free papers that meet federal specifications helps argue for inclusion in the federal government's procurement program.

References

Beaton, Archie. Executive Director, Chlorine Free Products Association. Personal communication with Abt Associates. Summer 1997.

Chlorine Free Products Association. *Guide to TCF & PCF Papers*. 1997.

"CFPA Works to Broaden 'Environmentally Preferable' Designation." *CFPA Today* Spring 1997: 2.

Chlorine Free Products Association. *Use of TCF/PCF Logos 1997 Certification Program*. June 9, 1997.

Chlorine Free Products Association. *A New Association was Formed to Promote TCF Technology and Products*. March 16, 1994.

Product Categories

Final Categories

- Virgin fiber paper

- Recycled content paper

Categories Under Consideration

Drinking water purification

Recreational water purification

